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ends (Fig. 9, k). Bodkin-like bone points are used as head scratchers and also to disentangle the warp in weaving (Fig. 14, g). Women often carry them thrust into their hair, but they are not ornaments and are rarely decorated. Other long bone points are occasionally used as meat forks. The jawbones of oxen are often used in mat making, to smooth and polish the fabric (Fig. 12, g). 321 [413]

Bone is shaped with knives while still fresh and polished like horn. Both horn and bone objects are sometimes decorated with series of small incised circles, each circle having a dot in the center. These are made with a slender, forked, iron drill which is shaped like a heavy needle with the tip of the eye broken off. The drill is set in a wooden shaft about a foot long. The shaft is twirled between the palms. One point of the drill makes the central dot, while the other revolves about it and incises the circle. When on bone, the circles are usually rubbed with soot, to heighten the effect. [531] [413]

Hide is used for sandals, thongs, a few pouches and knife sheaths, and for skull caps. Of these, only the sandals are common. There is no tanning of any sort. The hide is roughly fleshed with a small knife, but the hair is usually left on. Sandal soles are cut from dry rawhide, the flesh side being worn next the foot. Thongs for attachment pass through holes in the edges of the sole and are knotted beneath (Fig. 11, b). Caps are made from the skin of an ox hump, dried over a form (Fig. 11, h). Pouches are usually rectangular, like boxes. They are made by drawing the fresh hide over a block of wood, folding it, and sewing the ends together. When it has dried, the block is removed but the stiffness of the hide keeps it in shape (Fig. 11, a, d). Knife sheaths are made in the same way. 281 [291]

The Zafimaniry occasionally tooled their knife sheaths and small pouches. The hide was first dried, then soaked in water until the hair could be rubbed off with the fingers. It was then bent over a wooden form, flesh side in, and sewed. Lastly, designs were pressed into the surface with a blunt point of hard wood or bone. A pouch and sheath decorated in this way are illustrated (Figs. 5, a; 11, g). The sheath may be of Betsileo manufacture. This type of decoration is now obsolete. 281 531

MATTING AND BASKETRY

285 462

Mats and baskets are the commonest of all Tanala manufactures. Every woman is expected to make those used by her own household. A bride spends the month before her marriage in making a supply, including one especially fine mat which she presents to her parents-

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2 85 462 in-law on arrival at her new home. Later, she constantly makes more as the old ones wear out and usually keeps an unfinished mat or basket to work on in her spare time, as our own housewives keep fancywork.

285 [462] Only two techniques are employed in mat making, checkerwork and twilled work. The former is practically limited to the large, rigid mats of split and flattened bamboo which are used for house walls and floors. These are made exclusively by men. Large green bamboos are split lengthwise and flattened out by pounding them with a mallet. The strips, which are from 3 to 4 inches wide, are then interwoven and the ends trimmed off. Only one flexible mat woven in checkerwork was seen, a small square used as a dust pan (Fig. 18, c).

All ordinary mats (*sihy*) are twilled, the usual weave being over two and under two, although the number is varied for decorative effect. The twilled mats may be divided into two types, hard and soft. The hard mats are used for lining the walls of houses in the cold season (*fandambanana*), as floor coverings, sleeping mats, and, in many gentes, for serving cooked rice. The soft mats are used mainly for clothing.

The hard mats are made from several species of rushes, two varieties of fan palm, and, where it is available, pandanus. The rushes and pandanus are harvested just as the leaves begin to turn yellow. For palm mats the young, unopened leaves are taken. In both cases the material is cut into long strips, the midrib or other heavy portions removed, and the strips dried in the sun. When nearly dry, the strips are drawn between the thumb and the edge of a sliver of bamboo, to make them softer and more pliable. The thumb is protected by a cloth guard. The material is then done up in bundles and stored in the house until needed. In mat weaving, the worker sits on the ground with the work in front of her on another mat. No lapboard is used. In a few very fine mats the strips are probably moistened before weaving, but I never saw this done. From time to time the work is smoothed and flattened with a polisher. These polishers are usually made from the central portion of the lower jaw of an ox, but large shells of the cowrie variety and smooth river pebbles are also used. Bone polishers are sometimes decorated with incised circles (Fig. 12, g).

The Tanala hard mats are strong and well made but are, as a rule, of coarser weave than similar mats from the plateau. Those of pandanus are considered the most serviceable, with those of rushes

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next. Mats of palm leaves are the handsomest, as they are almost white with a glossy surface, but they do not wear well. Floor mats, etc., are always woven as a whole, not made from pieces sewn together, as among some other Madagascar tribes. 285

At least 80 per cent of the hard mats are undecorated. The commonest decoration consists of a line of broader twilling running around the mat 2 to 4 inches from its edges and parallel with them. When there is further decoration, the space inside this border is divided into a series of squares which are separated by bands of wide twilling. The twilling within each square differs from that of the adjoining squares, the various types of twilling being arranged symmetrically (Fig. 12, d). The designs are not named and have no special significance. They are of the simplest geometric type and there are no attempts to reproduce natural forms. At the present time a few colored mats are made, but these are a recent development and the dyes are always anilines. In many cases the colored patterns are nothing more than diagonal strips which intersect at various points, the woven designs running across them unbroken. 285 531

Soft mats are made principally by the southern Tanala, who employ them as a substitute for cloth. They are identical with those used by the southeast coast tribes and may have been introduced from that region. They are woven from various tough sedges, *harefo* and *herana* being the best. In some localities these are cultivated in flooded beds, like rice. The leaves are very dark green, tubular, like garlic, and grow 18 inches to 2 feet high. They are harvested when the tips begin to turn yellow, rolled in powdered kaolin until thoroughly coated, then spread out on mats in the sun. When nearly dry, they are made up into bundles about 2 inches in diameter and beaten with a cylindrical wooden mallet or rice pestle until they become soft and pliable. They are never split. 285 [171] [248]

The technique of weaving is the same as for the hard mats, except that the soft mats are usually woven in strips not over 18 inches wide. These are later sewn together to form blankets and garments. The best ones are made from small stems and are so closely woven that they resemble coarse canvas. They are rarely decorated. After weaving, the mat is taken to running water, kneaded and worked under water with the feet, to make it more pliable.

All Tanala basketry is of the hand-woven type.[1] Coiled basketry is unknown and its general distribution in Madagascar suggests that it has been introduced from Africa in relatively recent times. 285 174

[1] The classifications used are those of Otis T. Mason, Aboriginal American Basketry, Report of U. S. National Museum, 1902.

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285 it has been introduced from Africa in relatively recent times. Four types of weaving are employed: twilled work, wicker work, an open weave for which there is no term in English, and twined work. At least 90 per cent of all baskets are twilled over two and under two, the technique being identical with that employed for ordinary mats. The members always run diagonally with respect to both the rectangular bottom and sides. The materials are, as a rule, the same as those used in mat weaving, but large, coarsely woven baskets are often made from split papyrus. There is also a limited use of the [824] inner bark of various trees, called *hafotra*, which is more commonly employed for cloth and cordage. Soft sedges of the sort used for clothing mats are rarely used for basketry, but are employed for certain flat baskets or sacks.

Although twilled-work baskets vary greatly in size and material only a few shapes are in use. The commonest form has a square bottom with sides which are rectangular below, becoming more rounded as they rise until, in the deeper examples, the rim is circular. Stiff, shallow baskets of this type, with sides 2 to 3 inches high, are used as dishes for serving food. Deeper and more flexible ones are used for all ordinary purposes. Small ones of carefully determined content are used as rice measures. These show a regular gradation in size and are the only type of basket for which specialization in manufacture has begun, the rice measures for each village usually being woven by one woman. Square, covered baskets, made by fitting two baskets of equal depth together, are used in dwellings for the storage of clothing, etc. (Fig. 12, f). Deep, oblong baskets are next in frequency of occurrence (Fig. 1, b). They are woven from a rather stiff rush and are used as sowing baskets. They are filled with seed and worn attached to the sower's waist. Covered baskets of the same shape and material, with a broad sling of cloth or matting, are used for carrying clothing and valuables when on journeys (Fig. 12, h). Bottle-shaped baskets are fairly common. There are two types, one with a deep, narrow body, slight shoulder and large neck (Fig. 12, c), the other with a short, wide body, flat shoulder and small neck (Fig. 12, a). Small baskets of the first type are used as containers for salt and larger ones for seed. Those of the second type seem to be primarily seed baskets, used to store maize, rice, etc., until sowing time. One seed basket collected is shaped very much like a sock, with a short lateral sleeve and opening (Fig. 12, b). No others of this type were seen and its shape is probably a result of the maker's fancy. Seed beans are stored in peculiar baskets having

[H13]

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FIG. 12. Mats and Baskets. a, Small-necked Basket; b, Sock-shaped Basket; c, Large-necked Basket; d, Section of Sleeping Mat; e, Pouch Covered with Braid; f, Covered Basket; g, Ox Jaw for Polishing Mats; h, Traveling Basket.

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285 from two to four long, narrow, cylindrical tubes which branch out from a flat central portion. When in use they are hung with the flat part above and the tubes pendant. The opening is in the center, on the lower side of the basket as hung (Fig. 1, c, d). This form is said to be an imitation of a cluster of bean pods and may have originally had a magical significance but, if so, this has now been forgotten.

The Tanala also make several types of flat baskets which might better be classed as sacks or pouches. Small pouches, pointed at the bottom, are hung on the walls of dwellings as receptacles for spoons, matches, etc. (Fig. 13, a). Their purpose seems to be as much decorative as utilitarian and they are the only Tanala baskets which are woven in colors. Flat, oblong, covered pouches are carried when traveling and serve the purpose of a pocket. These pouches are hung from the shoulder by a string across the chest. One example, made by the Zafimaniry gens, has the outside of the cover and the bottom of the inner pouch covered with sewn braid (Fig. 12, e). The braid is made from *hafotra* in a three-strand plait. No other examples of such work were seen. Deep, flexible sacks woven from sedge or strips of *hafotra* are used for carrying rice and other dry foods when traveling. The open end is usually sewn up except for a slit about an inch long. Similar sacks are sometimes stuffed with grass or leaves and used as pillows.

Small basketry stands are used to elevate the food dishes of the head of the house and of honored guests. The forms vary greatly, for the makers seem to allow their imaginations free reign. The commonest rests are simply rings of stiff matting two or more layers thick. Another form consists of a basket with a base of the same size and depth as the rim, the effect being that of two baskets joined bottom to bottom (Fig. 8, h). Still another form consists of a well-made basket dish with a high, woven base of smaller diameter (Fig. 8, f).

Triangular conical baskets, usually of small size, are used as strainers for purifying salt. This is dissolved, strained through, and then allowed to recrystallize. They were formerly used for leaching wood ashes, the potash being used as a salt substitute (Fig. 6, a).

Collars of matting about a foot wide, like baskets without bottoms, are placed about the mouths of rice mortars to prevent the grain from falling to the ground.

352 285 Basketry stools, stuffed with straw, are in common use. They consist of a wide circular band of matting which is drawn inward

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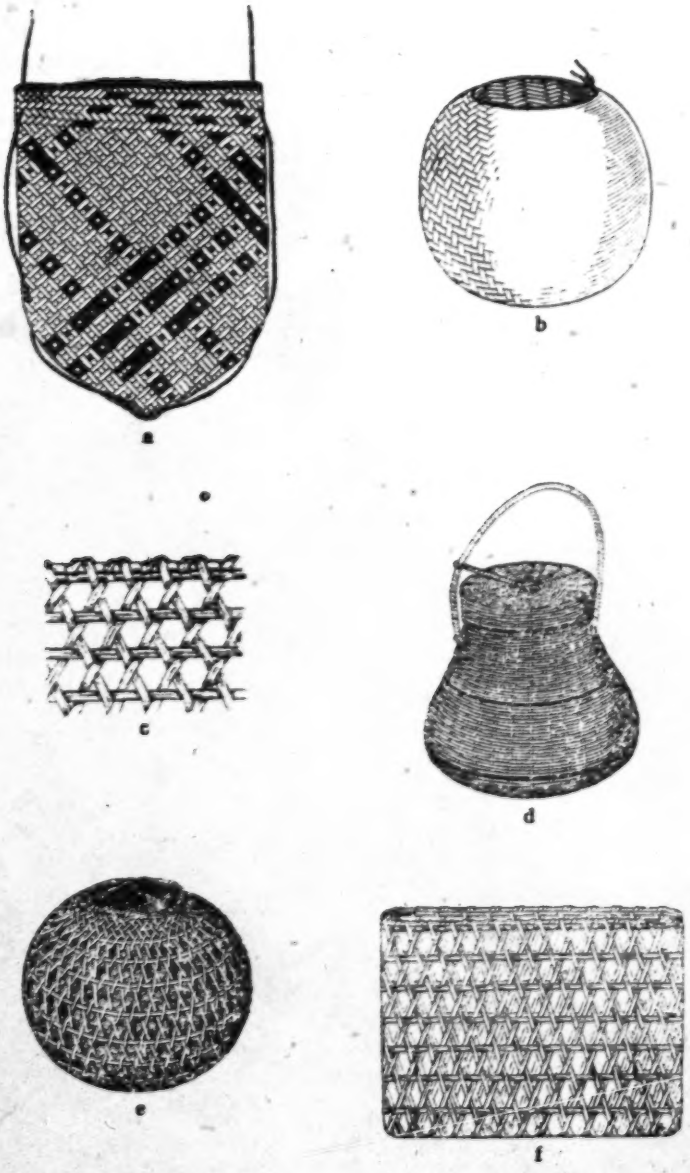

FIG. 13. Baskets. a, Trinket Basket; b, Mat[illegible]stool; c, Detail of Open Weave; d, Wicker Work Basket; e, Gourd Covered with Open Weave; f, Egg or Spoon Basket.

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285 352 along the sides by means of draw strings threaded through the binding. Small separate squares of matting are inserted under the edges of the band, forming the ends of the stool. When first made, these stools are nearly spherical (Fig. 13, b).

[531] Pouches and stools are sometimes decorated with simple woven designs like those used on mats, but the bulk of Tanala basketry is devoid of ornament and rather coarsely woven.

285 [824] Baskets of wicker work and open weave are made exclusively by men. The material is a tough, flexible vine called *vahy*. This is split and flattened. Wicker work baskets are extremely rare, only one specimen being collected. This is a small, cylindrical, covered basket identical with those manufactured by some of the southeast coast tribes and was probably made in imitation of these (Fig. 13, d). The members run vertically and horizontally.

[226] Wicker work technique is regularly employed for one type of fish scoop. This has the form of a half cylinder, the rigid vertical elements of the wicker work running crosswise. The flat ends of the scoop are formed by bending the longitudinal splints inward and fastening them together with rough twined work in bark (Fig. 3, b). Wicker work technique is also used for house doors, the material being split bamboo, and for small open frames used for smoking fish.

In the technique which I have called open weave, the foundation consists of two series of parallel, diagonal members intersecting at regular intervals. Horizontal members are woven over and under these immediately above each intersection (Fig. 13, c). The finished fabric has large six-sided meshes. This technique is employed for deep, narrow, oblong baskets, one of which is to be found in nearly every household (Fig. 13, f). It is hung up beside the fireplace and utensils are dropped into it after washing, the open meshes allowing them to drain and dry quickly. Because of their stiffness, such baskets are also used for storing eggs and other breakables. The same technique is used for the close-fitting, semi-rigid network woven about gourds used for storing grease (Fig. 13, e), and in the manufacture of a large heart-shaped type of fish trap (Fig. 3, d). [171] It seems to be almost universal in Indonesia and may have been brought to Madagascar from that region.

285 226 Twined work is employed in the manufacture of fish traps, eel cages, fish scoops and hanging platforms, but never for real baskets. The traps are conical or bottle shaped and the cages cylindrical. They are made from closely spaced, lengthwise strips of bamboo, about ½ inch wide. At intervals of 5 to 8 inches these strips are

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fastened together by bands of twined work, usually three rows wide. The twining material is unsplit *vahy* vine. The traps have a conical entrance way, made from pointed slips of bamboo. On one side there is an aperture opened and closed by sliding slips of bamboo into the first row of twining (Fig. 3, e, g).

The fish scoops are conical, 2 to 3 feet across the mouth and 3 to 5 feet long. They are made from long, slender, somewhat flexible splints taken from the midrib of the raffia palm. At intervals of 3 or 4 inches these are fastened together by single rows of twined raffia fiber running at right angles to their length. The mouth of the scoop is held open by a hoop of roughly plaited vines. When not in use, this hoop is removed and the scoop rolled up laterally (Fig. 3, a).

The hanging platforms are made with the same materials and technique as the scoops just described. They are rectangular, reinforced with splints of bamboo at the edge, and are used in household sacrifices and for smoking fish (Fig. 3, c).

The Tanala also make a few trays or baskets from sections of large pandanus leaves. The heavy midrib is pared thin and the ends and sides of the section bent upward. The ends are then folded and sewn together (Fig. 6, g). Small baskets of this type are sometimes made of the sheaths of the giant bamboo, which are similarly folded and sewn.

There seems to be little or no use of bark containers. Fish traps are sometimes made from rolls of bark held in position by bands of twisted vine (Fig. 3, f).

MANUFACTURE OF BARK CLOTH

The Tanala Menabe claim that in the earliest times their clothing was made exclusively of beaten bark, called *fanto*. They have now learned how to weave and with this and the introduction of European cloth *fanto* has become obsolete. I never saw it in use, but specimens were made for me by a few of the older men, who still remember the process.

Fanto is made from the bark of the *voara* tree. When a wide piece is desired, trees up to a foot in diameter are used. The hard outer bark is scraped away on the tree until the soft inner bark is exposed. This is then detached by ringing the tree above and below and making a single vertical cut. The bark is laid in the sun until nearly dry, then beaten. The beater (*odintana*) is shaped like a European mallet, with a head of hard wood and an inserted handle